

New garrison commander discusses goals

Excited about facing challenges, working with community

Story by
HEATHER TASSMER
APG News

The new garrison and deputy installation commander is no stranger to Aberdeen Proving Ground.

Col. Jeffrey Weissman was assigned to APG from 2003 to 2004 at the U.S. Army Ordnance Center and Schools as an ordnance propanancy officer.

Weissman said he is thrilled to be back and that he and his wife Vickie had a positive experience when they lived at APG before.

“The short period of time that Vickie and I spent here...we really enjoyed the community. It’s a wonderful community. We are really excited to come back,” he said. “I never expected to come back as a garrison commander, but I am absolutely ecstatic about doing it.”

He said since he has just started, he is still working on specific, short-term goals.

His goals during the next several years include making base realignment and closure a successful process, he said.

“My goal is to ensure Aberdeen Proving



Ground Garrison supports all the tenants that are coming as well as leaving...that we are well prepared to execute the BRAC plan,” Weissman said. “That includes working with all of the ten-

ants that are here and are coming here, working with the community both on post and off post to ensure that as we execute BRAC, we create a great environment for all of our tenants.”

He said his second major goal is to “continue to provide first class support to all of the garrison’s tenants and the community and continuously improve on that support.”

“Our major function here is to support our customers which are our Soldiers, our civilians, our contractors and all of our Families,” he said.

Other projects that the garrison will be working on are the privatization of housing and leasing efforts between the garrison and commercial corporations during the next several years.

With the increased responsibility of the garrison and deputy commander position comes new challenges. Weissman discussed what the new challenges are for him.

“This [job] is different than any other position I have held in a lot of different ways,” he said. “I’ve gone through my military career as kind of a customer of the garrisons that I’ve

been assigned on over the last twenty-four years. Now being a leader in the garrison is completely different--working on the support team side and not the supported side.”

Another change is working with the combination of military, government civilians and contractors. He said he is used to working in units or organizations that are mostly military personnel.

Working at the Pentagon in G-4 [Logistics] gave him some exposure to working with civilians who made up 50 percent of the workforce, he said.

“I’m excited about [working with civilians] because my experience was very good,” Weissman said. “Our government civilians and contractors who support us are a phenomenal part of our military team.”

Weissman said he devotes his spare time to his Family, golfing and boating.

Weissman and his wife have six children: Erin, Benjamin, Nicole, Rachel, Ashley and Joseph.

He said three of them are in college and the other three will be entering college soon.

143rd Ordnance Battalion welcomes new commander



Lt. Col. Mary A. McPeak, second from right, leads her command team and the 143rd Ordnance Battalion as they pass in review during her change of command ceremony at McBride Parade Field July 13. Behind McPeak from left are Maj. Charles Seay, 1st Lt. Scott Hubbard, 2nd Lt. Todd Heightshoe and Capt. Germaine Simon.

Story and photos by
YVONNE JOHNSON
APG News

The U.S. Army Ordnance Mechanical Maintenance School and 61st Ordnance Brigade welcomed its newest battalion commander during a change of command ceremony at McBride Parade Field July 13, as Lt. Col. Mary A. McPeak assumed command of

the 143rd Ordnance Battalion from interim commander and executive officer Maj. George E. Davis.

Col. Bobby A. Towery, commander 61st Ordnance Brigade, led the ceremony which consisted of the traditional passing of the unit guidon, assisted by battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Luis Rivera.

Towery complimented the

battalion’s Soldiers who lined the field in four formations as well as the color guard, telling Rivera, “the troops look good and the colors performed flawlessly.”

“There is no doubt in my mind that the Soldiers who walk out of Donner Hall are some of the best trained Soldiers in the nation,” Towery said. “These Warriors standing

before you represent the thousands walking proud for our nation.”

Towery told Davis that he has “done well” as interim commander and offered words of welcome to McPeak.

“I know you will lead this battalion and their Families with distinction,” he said.

Davis thanked his command team, his superiors and his family for their support.

“It was an experience I’ll never forget,” he said. “The [143rd] looks forward to your leadership, mentorship and guidance,” he told McPeak.

McPeak thanked Davis for “a smooth transition,” and former commander, Lt. Col. Linwood Clark, “for setting the stage.”

“I am deeply honored to be the new commander of this outstanding organization,” McPeak said. “I am humbled by this awesome opportunity to make a difference in the readiness of our nation’s sons and daughters as they prepare to support America at war.”

She thanked God for the opportunity to lead Soldiers and told her husband and children, “Our Family just got bigger.”

The 215th Army Band, Massachusetts Army National Guard, led by Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Girard, pro-

vided the ceremony’s music.

Lt. Col. Mary A. McPeak

Born in Quito, Ecuador, McPeak moved to the United States in 1985 at age 17. In 1989, she was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Ordnance Corps after earning bachelor’s degrees in international studies and spanish from the University of Denver.

McPeak is a graduate of the Ordnance Officer Basic Course, Ordnance Officer Advanced Course, Combined Arms and Service Staff School (CAS3) and the Command and General Staff College.

Her past assignments include Germany; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Lee, Va., Fort

Leavenworth, Kan.; and Saudi Arabia and Iraq during Operation Desert Shield/Storm.

McPeak’s awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal (OLC), the Kuwaiti Liberation Medal, the Southwest Asia Ribbon with three bronze stars, the National Defense Service Medal and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

McPeak is married to Lt. Col. Bruce McPeak, G4 20th Support Command (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosives). They have two children, Sam and Haleigh.



1st Sgt. Jeffery Hyde, right, and Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Girard, far left, salute as they lead the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 215th Army Band pass in review.

Command

From front page

women behind the men and women behind the guns.”

“Your innovation and perseverance will see us through to achieve our goals,” he said.

He wished Weissman and his Family well.

“It’s a great command. Good luck to you,” he said.

Weissman said he was “truly honored to represent this great organization.”

“I’m committed to providing the best possible for the defense of the nation,” he said.

He thanked his Family for their support and the IMC for trusting him.

“To the Soldiers and civilians of APG, I look forward to working with all of you in partnership,” he said.

Garrison chaplain Lt. Col. Ruben D. Colon delivered the invocation.

The 215th Army Band from the Massachusetts Army National Guard provided the ceremony’s music and closed the program with the 90th Anniversary March – “Pio-



Photo by SEAN KIEF, APG PHOTO LAB

Col. Jeffrey S. Weissman, left, smiles as he hands the Garrison colors to Command Sgt. Maj. Pedro Rodriguez as the two assume the leadership of the APG Garrison.

neers in Proving,” an original song written by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Frederick Ellwein and Sgt. 1st Class Robert Baerle of the 389th Army Band (AMC’s Own) whose members were on block leave.

Col. Jeffrey S. Weissman

Weissman was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., and raised on Long Island. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant, Air Defense Artillery, in 1983 from the U.S. Military Acad-

emy at West Point. He comes to Aberdeen Proving Ground after serving in the Pentagon G4 as the chief of Maintenance Policy for the Army. He first served at APG as the ordnance propanancy officer at the U.S. Army Ordnance Center and Schools from 2003 to 2004.

Past assignments include Fort Bliss, Texas; Germany; Redstone Arsenal, Ala.; Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; U.S. Army Europe Headquarters, Heidelberg, Germany; Fort Jackson, S.C.; and in Baghdad, Iraq as the Multi-National Forces-Iraq Base Closure and Transition Chief.

Weissman’s military education includes Air Assault School, Airborne School, the Ordnance Officer Advanced Course, Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering and a master’s in strategic studies.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with 6 Oak Leaf Clusters; Army Commendation Medal with 4 OLC, the Army Achievement Medal with 2 OLC, the Joint Meritorious Unit Award, the

Army Superior Unit Award, the National Defense Service Medal, the South West Asia Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Medal and the Overseas Service Medal with OLC.

Weissman and his wife Vickie have six children, Erin, Nicole, Benjamin, Ashley, Rachel and Joseph.

Command Sgt. Maj. Pedro Rodriguez

Rodriguez comes to the APG Garrison after serving as the command sergeant major for the 22nd Chemical Battalion (Tech Escort) in APG South.

His past assignments include Fort Campbell, Ky.; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Drum, N.Y.; Dugway Proving Ground, Utah; Johnston Island Atoll; Germany; Saudi Arabia and Iraq in support of Operation Desert Shield/Storm and in Bosnia for Operation Joint Endeavor.

He has served in virtually every enlisted position of responsibility to include squad leader, platoon sergeant, first sergeant and installation sergeants major (Dugway Proving Ground).

His military education includes the Primary Leadership Course, Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course, First Sergeant Course, Garrison Sergeants Major Course and the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy.

Rodriguez’s awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal (1 silver leaf oak leaf cluster), Army Commendation Medal (1 silver and 2 bronze OLC), Army Achievement Medal (4 OLC), Good Conduct Medal (9th award), the National Defense Service Medal, Superior Unit Award (with 1 oak leaf cluster), NATO Medal, Global War on Terror Medal, Southwest Asian Service Medal, and Kuwaiti Liberation Medal.

Rodriguez is a member of the Sergeant Morales and Sergeant Audie Murphy clubs, and he is a recipient of the Ancient Order of the Dragon and the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment Leonard Award.

Rodriguez is married to the former Marjorie Torres of New York City. They have three sons, Pedro and Sebastian, who are both in the Army, and Bernardo.

APG News

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Deadline for copy is Thursday at noon for the following Thursday’s paper.

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